News release

Winter weather summary

3 March 2006

In September 2005, the Met Office made predictions about the coming winter. The final figures are now in for the months of December 2005 through to February 2006 and it is now possible to assess the winter of 2005/6.

In summary; Europe has experienced below-average temperatures over a wide area through the winter 2005/6. The winter has been very dry across the whole of the UK, warmer-than-average in the north, colder-than-average in the south.

In the original forecast there were five main issues that it is now possible to verify. It can be said that in four out of these five cases, the predicted most likely event happened:

WINTER REVIEW

	Prediction	Outcome
Mean temperature across Europe	Most likely colder than average	Colder than average for many areas
UK mean temperature	Most likely colder than average	Warmer than average
Southern UK mean temperature	Most likely colder than average	Colder than average
UK precipitation	Most likely drier than average	Drier than average
North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) for the winter season	Negative	Negative

- Europe has experienced below-average temperatures over a wide area through the winter 2005/6, including southern parts of the UK. This is the outcome we predicted was most likely
- Northern parts of the UK did not follow the outcome we predicted as being most likely, and had a mild winter
- The UK as a whole experienced a slightly warmer-than-average winter, but which was still the coldest since 2000/1
- England has had a colder-than-average winter - the coldest since 1996/7
- Wales has had a colder-than-average winter - the coldest since 1996/7
- The coldest region relative to the long-term (30-year) average was southern England, at 0.4 °C below normal; the coldest since 1996/7
- Scotland and Northern Ireland had a mean temperature above normal (0.77 and 0.48 °C respectively), which continued a run of five mild winters for these parts of the UK
- The average of this winter's Central England Temperature (the longest existing temperature record in the world), was below the average for 1971-2000

More details of winter 2005/6 in the UK and Europe

Original forecast issued in September 2005

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